



Media release – for immediate release

## Environmental rescue tale inspires Tim Flannery

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The transformation of a former quarry and tip into a conservation park with wildlife including echidna, native fish and frogs, 70 species of birds the occasional kangaroo is chronicled in a book that offers inspiration to Australian environment and landcare organisations.

*Darebin Parklands: Escaping the Claws of the Machine*, by Dr Sarah Mirams, with foreword by former Australian of the Year Professor Tim Flannery, tells of how local community action over 40 years saved and restored a creekside site earmarked for freeway or industrial development.

“I commend this story to anyone who has a vision for improving his or her community, who seeks inspiration to make it happen,” Professor Flannery said in the book’s foreword.

Dr Mirams said the story of how residents in Melbourne’s north-eastern suburbs – incensed by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works bulldozing trees along the creek – banded together to save and rehabilitate the site was a local tale with universal significance.

“This is a story of one small community group but this particular time, the 1970s, was the beginning of the environmental movement, so all across Melbourne, all across Victoria, all across the world, there was growing awareness of issues like pollution, loss of open space in cities and water quality, with people coming together and working for change.”

Dr Mirams said the quote in the book’s title came from a letter written by the president of the residents’ group, the Darebin Parklands Association, to the Premier of the day, Sir Rupert Hamer, pleading for the site to be saved “from the claws of the machine” and kept as open space.

Sir Rupert, who made Victoria “the Garden State” and instigated the city’s green wedges policy, later helped contribute the equivalent of a million dollars in funding needed to buy the site for parkland.

*Darebin Parklands: Escaping the Claws of the Machine*, a project of the United Nations Association of Australia award-winning environment group, the Darebin Parklands Association, is published by Melbourne Books. It is available from the secure online store a [www.dpa.org.au](http://www.dpa.org.au) for the special pre-launch price of \$29.95. It will be launched on 13 November at Darebin Parklands Discovery Day.

**Photos/images:** High resolution images and photo opportunities available  
**Media enquiries:** Ingrid Svendsen, president, Darebin Parklands Association, 0409 007 530  
David Tenenbaum, Melbourne Books, 03 9662 2051

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PO Box 3 / Ivanhoe / Victoria / 3079

[info@dpa.org.au](mailto:info@dpa.org.au) / [www.dpa.org.au](http://www.dpa.org.au) / [www.facebook.com/darebinpark](http://www.facebook.com/darebinpark)